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ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The seven titles deal with the following topics: (1) the effect of relaxation training on anxiety for the poetry recitation tasks among elementary school children; (2) musical theatre in higher education; (3) developing faith communication skills of adults through drama; (4) the Federal Theatre project in San Francisco; (5) the establishment of theatrical activity in a remote Michigan settlement from 1827 to 1862; (6) kinesthetic appeals in the poetic structures of William Stafford, David Wagoner, and Richard Hugo; and (7) the Hearst Greek theatre of the University of California from 1903 to 1984. (HTH)

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# Theatre and Oral Interpretation:

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This bibliography has been compiled as part of a continuing series designed to make information on relevant dissertations available to users of the ERIC system. Monthly issues of Dissertation Abstracts International are reviewed in order to compile abstracts of dissertations on related topics, which thus become accessible in searches of the ERIC database. Ordering information for dissertations themselves is included at the end of the bibliography.

Abstracts of the following dissertations are included in this collection:

Blevins, Barbara Kay
THE EFFECT OF RELAXATION TRAINING ON ANXIETY FOR THE POETRY RECITATION TASKS AMONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

Crowe, Rachael Morris
MUSICAL THEATRE IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A SURVEY AND AN ANALYSIS OF COURSES AND DEGREE PROGRAMS OFFERED IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES OF THE UNITED STATES

Einsel, Alan Dee
DEVELOPING FAITH COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF ADULTS THROUGH DRAMA

Kahn, David Matthew
THE FEDERAL THEATRE PROJECT IN SAN FRANCISCO: A HISTORY OF AN INDIGENOUS THEATRE

Knonw, Gary George
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THEATRICAL ACTIVITY IN A REMOTE SETTLEMENT: GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 1827 TO 1862

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A WESTERN PORTAL OF CULTURE: THE HEARST GREEK THEATRE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, 1903 - 1984

## THE EFFECT OF RELAXATION TRAINING ON ANXIETY FOR THE POETRY RECITATION TASKS AMONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

Order No. DA8515235

BLEVINS, BARBARA KAY, ED.D. *Oklahoma State University*, 1984. 61pp. Adviser: Lowell Caneday

*Scope of Study*. The purpose of this study was to assess the effects of relaxation of students assigned the task of poetry recitation in class. Eighty-six fifth and sixth grade students made up four groups completing the study. Two groups (A and C) were instructed in relaxation techniques that included deep breathing exercises, muscle tension relaxation, guided imagery, and meditation. The duration of the study was seven weeks, 75 minutes a week, for 14 sessions. Forty-five minutes a week were used in training, with the remaining 30 minutes being used for performance of the task of poetry recitation. Two other groups made up the control groups B and D. Equal time was spent with those groups, with the 45 minutes of training time being used to instruct in poetry writing and examination of the elements of poetry. As with experimental groups A and C, 30 minutes weekly were used for recitation of the assigned poem.

*Findings and Conclusions*. Data was collected and treated with ANOVA and with a follow up t-test treatment. A significant difference was reported with the STAIC, indicating that subjects receiving relaxation training reduced their levels of anxiety to a greater degree than those not receiving relaxation training ($F = 21.68$, $p < .001$).

Implications of this study support the effectiveness of relaxation training for reducing anxiety levels in elementary school classrooms. Based on the results of this study and the limited research in the area of relaxation training for young children, it is evident that further study is needed.

## MUSICAL THEATRE IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A SURVEY AND AN ANALYSIS OF COURSES AND DEGREE PROGRAMS OFFERED IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES OF THE UNITED STATES

Order No. DA8513365

CROWE, RACHAEL MORRIS, PH.D. *The Florida State University*, 1985. 337pp. Major Professor: Stuart Baker

Considered an indigenous art form and the one unique contribution the United States has made to the theatre, musical theatre has now become a focus of study in the curricula of American colleges and universities. The purposes of this study were (1) to identify the four-year colleges and universities in the United States that are teaching courses and awarding degrees in musical theatre and (2) to examine and compare the scope of courses, degree programs and instruction of these institutions. Through this examination and comparison, implications from the conclusions and recommendations for further study were suggested.

The study was limited to classes or workshops offered for academic college credit that deal exclusively with musical theatre. In order to have access to this information, two survey questionnaires were designed and mailed to four-year colleges and universities offering either a music or a theatre degree or both. The first survey was a comprehensive postal card questionnaire sent to twelve hundred such schools to determine which ones did include musical theatre courses and degrees in their curricula. The second survey was a detailed questionnaire designed to gather information concerning descriptive data on the type and scope of courses and degrees being offered.

Chapter I presents the introductory material of the study, including a brief historical sketch of both music and theatre as they became college academic subjects. Chapter II explains the methodology of the study and offers reasons for the inclusion of each question in the survey. Chapter III analyzes and compares each aspect of the musical theatre course categories offered by both degree and non-degree schools. Chapter IV summarizes the developmental problems, pedagogical concepts, goals and objectives offered by the respondents. Chapter V presents the summary, conclusions, implications and recommendations made from the study.

Interest in musical theatre courses, degrees and productions on American college campuses has been growing for a number of years. It is appropriate that they be given serious academic consideration.

## DEVELOPING FAITH COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF ADULTS THROUGH DRAMA

Order No. DA8515798

EINSEL, ALAN DEE, D.MIN. *Drew University*, 1985. 245pp. Adviser: Evelyn Alford

Drama has a message of relevance for persons in today's world and compels Christians to examine this art form as a vital ministry within the church. Interest in the relationship between drama and faith was the foundation for developing this professional project. The purposes of the project were to provide a creative program of drama through which adults would have an opportunity to share their faith; to offer an opportunity for deeper faith dialogue to develop between the pastor and members; and to develop the communication skills of participants so that they would be able to share their faith and communicate with others more effectively.

The project's action phase included ten sessions of a drama group, comprised of twenty-two persons and the candidate. The members, who were twenty to seventy-six years of age, represented a wide variety of occupations in life, varied in past drama experiences, and differed in length of local church membership from several months to twenty-six years. This diverse group united efforts and became very close. Individuals grew in their abilities to share their faith, to conduct dialogue with the pastor, and to communicate with other persons. By the end of the project, members' evaluations indicated that they had grown as persons and in their understandings of faith and drama's relationship to the church.

Emphasis was upon a variety of dramatic techniques especially during the first several sessions. The group began by reading plays and discussing them. The last four sessions dealt with the reading, discussion, rehearsal, and performance of a play for the congregation during a worship service. The successful production, a learning and growing experience for drama group members, had an impact upon the participants and the audience.

The conclusions reached were these: (1) drama is effective in developing persons spiritually; (2) drama is effective with all ages; (3) the candidate is person oriented whereas the core of church leaders is task oriented; and (4) there are numerous ways to utilize drama in the church. Consequently the project's purposes were achieved beyond initial expectations.

## THE FEDERAL THEATRE PROJECT IN SAN FRANCISCO: A HISTORY OF AN INDIGENOUS THEATRE

Order No. DA8512871

KAHN, DAVID MATTHEW, PH.D. *University of California, Berkeley*, 1984. 398pp. Chairman: Dunbar Ogden

The purpose of this study is to define and analyze the activities of the Federal Theatre project in San Francisco. The San Francisco Project was one branch of a nationally subsidized theatre organization which operated between 1935 and 1939, when government support for the Federal Theatre was eliminated by an act of Congress. While the Project did not survive the loss of federal subsidy, its history serves as the one working example of a decentralized, government supported American national theatre.

Although the Project was created as one of many emergency relief measures designed to ease the economic hardships of the depression, the Federal Theatre was imbued with a sense of purpose and opportunity which went beyond the immediate need of providing employment for theatre workers. The organizers of the Federal Theatre hoped to use the unique circumstances of government support to establish a regionally based federation of theatres which emphasised new dramatic forms and theatrical methods, the training and rehabilitation of theatre workers, and the establishment of indigenous theatre organizations which served and reflected their communities and were perceived as essential cultural institutions worthy of public support.

By studying the background, organization, and history of the San Francisco Project, certain principles are revealed concerning government and regional theatre in the United States. The Project demonstrated the importance of a theatre's identification with its community, and some methods by which that identification could be achieved. It demonstrated the value of subsidy in allowing a theatre to experiment, evolve, and establish itself as a permanent institution.

The principles which emerge from a consideration of the Federal Theatre, as it functioned on a local level, are ideals which remain unfulfilled as yet in the American Theatre. However, it was the expressed hope of many Federal Theatre workers, in San Francisco and elsewhere, that out of the Federal Theatre experience a living theatre would emerge which would build upon the lessons of the past, continue to develop and adapt its activities to the needs of its society, and come to be regarded as an essential national resource.

## THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THEATRICAL ACTIVITY IN A REMOTE SETTLEMENT: GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 1827 TO 1862 Order No. DA8512445

KOHOW, GARY GEORGE, PH.D. *The University of Michigan*, 1985. 405pp. Chairman: Jack E. Bender

This study expands the body of knowledge of nineteenth-century American theatre, specifically, provincial theatre at mid-century. Professional legitimate theatre receives primary emphasis; amateur theatricals and professional entertainments related to theatre receive secondary emphasis. The study begins with 1827, when Grand Rapids was founded, and ends with 1862, when theatre, though well established in the city, was temporarily halted by the Civil War.

Chapter I is an introduction. Chapter II outlines, in overlapping chronologies, school exhibitions, quasi-theatrical entertainments, moral debates regarding theatre, and amateur civic theatricals. Chapter III chronicles professional acting troupes, repertoires, managers and management; halls used by troupes, including the city's first opera house, are described. Chapter IV profiles leading performers. Chapter V summarizes and concludes the study. Appendices include lists of repertoires by company, performers and their roles, and selected news items.

Grand Rapids was visited by fifteen professional touring troupes between 1849 and 1862. On three occasions, beginning in 1856, attempts were made to establish a permanent resident company. Some players vacationed in the area; others made it their home. In the summer of 1857, two professional companies competed for the attention of the Grand Rapids audience. The city was not only attractive to touring companies, but they were welcomed. Amateur theatricals were popular in Grand Rapids from 1838 on, and the first attempt at civic theatre flourished prior to the Civil War. Leading citizens, including pastors as well as newspaper editors, supported the "moral," legitimate theatre. Improved transportation in the form of steamer service on the Grand River, a plank road from Kalamazoo, and, eventually, rail service, made the isolated community readily accessible to touring groups. Of particular interest to this study is the touring circuit which ran by waterway from Buffalo through Cleveland and Detroit to Milwaukee and Chicago and eventually led to Grand Haven, where companies boarded a river steamer which carried them to Grand Rapids. Later troupes played Grand Rapids as they traveled the Detroit, Grand Haven, Milwaukee Railroad, which included ferry service across Lake Michigan; Grand Rapids became an important center in the theatrical circuits which developed throughout the Great Lakes region.

## KINESTHETIC APPEALS IN THE POETIC STRUCTURES OF WILLIAM STAFFORD, DAVID WAGONER AND RICHARD HUGO Order No. DA8508315

MILLER, GAIL TRACY, PH.D. *The University of Texas at Austin*, 1984. 303pp. Supervisor: Lynn Miller

Over the past twenty years the field of oral interpretation has undergone a shift in emphasis which has changed the way performers approach poetry. The emphasis in performance has shifted from a text-centered approach where performance is viewed as a means of understanding the text in an analytical, critical fashion, to a performance-centered approach where the poem is regarded as embodied speech which presents us with a kind of experiential knowledge. Twentieth century literary theorists such as Wallace Bacon have recognized that viewing the poem as a physically sensuous body which appeals to us kinesthetically is vital for a sensitive embodiment of that poem in performance.

While interpretration theorists have emphasized the importance of embodiment and kinesthetic response to poetry, most of the research focuses on kinetic behaviors in performance. This study will address the need for more research on the earlier phase of the connection between poetry and the body by examining the kinds of kinesthetic appeals operating in the structures of contemporary Pacific Northwest poets William Stafford, David Wagoner and Richard Hugo. Few of the basic interpretation texts examine how structural elements such as rhythmic patterns, sonic patterns, line lengths and endings and tensions and resistances appeal to our bodily responses. By studying how poems gesture and appeal to our bodily responses, we can sensitize interpreters to possible kinesthetic appeals in the structures of contemporary poems which will allow them to embody those poems more fully and sensitively.

In addition to helping performers gain a more complete embodiment of a poem, this study could offer some new perspectives on the way we teach the performance of poetry. Currently, even though performance-centered theorists say they want to deemphasize the analytic approach to texts, most contemporary interpretration texts devote a great deal of effort to teaching the student analytic critical skills. If interpretation courses focused first on the poem as a kinesthetic body which elicits bodily responses from performers, we could begin to move toward the kind of knowledge, the knowing by doing that performance offers.

## A WESTERN PORTAL OF CULTURE: THE HEARST GREEK THEATRE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, 1903 - 1984 Order No. DA8513034

WARDRIP, MARK ALLEN, PH.D. *University of California, Berkeley*, 1984. 409pp. Chairman: Travis Bogard

Built in 1903 at a cost of $42,000, The William Randolph Hearst Greek Theatre on the Berkeley campus of the University of California has served for eighty years as a centerpiece of activity for the University, the local community and the greater San Francisco Bay area. Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, Prime Minister Nehru and Edward Kennedy are among the important political dignitaries who have appeared there; the roster of distinguished artists includes Sarah Bernhardt, Margaret Anglin, Leontyne Price and Luciano Pavarotti. There in 1945 the new United Nations organization held its first public convocation, and there in 1964 the Free Speech Movement was given its first revolutionary expression. The focal point of campus life for many generations of University students, the Theatre still regularly accommodates rallies, university meetings and commencement exercises; it is also used frequently during summer months for concerts of popular and rock music.

One purpose of this study is to document the range and diversity of activities which have taken place in the Greek Theatre during the last eighty years. Such documentation, however, prompts an examination of the Theatre's impact on campus and community life and leads to an assessment of its influence on broader social and cultural developments in the Bay Area since the beginning of the twentieth century. Initial chapters explore circumstances at the University and within the State of California which led to the Theatre's conception and construction; subsequent chapters examine the relationship which developed between the Theatre and its surrounding community after its dedication and the changes in that relationship during the years that have followed. Consideration is also given to the broader developments in American educational, community and professional theatre which have influenced, or been influenced by the continuing presence of the Greek Theatre since 1903.

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